

REMARKS

In the above referenced Office Action, the claims were divided into Group I (claims 1-43 drawn to an apparatus) and Group II (claims 44-52 drawn to a method). The following patentably distinct species were identified within Group I: Species 1 - Figures 4-8; Species 2 - Figure 9; and Species 3 - Figures 10-14. Similarly, within Group II, the following patentably distinct species were identified: Species 1 - Figure 15; Species 2 - Figure 16; and Species 3 - Figure 17.

The applicants elect to proceed with examination of Group I, Species 1, without traverse. Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-15, 18, 20-23, 25-29, 32-35, 37-41, and 43 read on this election, and thus the applicants request examination of these claims. The foregoing election is made with the understanding that the Examiner and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office are now bound to the finding of non-obviousness between each of the species.

Based on the foregoing election, claims 44-52 have been canceled without prejudice to pursuing these claims in a continuation, divisional, continuation-in-part or other application, and claims 5, 8, 16, 17, 19, 24, 30, 31, 36, and 42 have been withdrawn without prejudice to consideration of these claims upon allowance of a generic claim. Upon allowance of the generic claims, applicants request consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or which otherwise include all the limitations of the allowed generic claims. Additionally, claim 38 has been amended in this paper to correct a clerical error. No new matter has been added.

If additional fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge any deficiency in fees herein to Deposit Account No. 50-0665.

Respectfully submitted,
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